

571—108.7 (481A) River otter and bobcat.

108.7(1) License requirements. Each person who takes river otters or bobcats shall have a valid fur harvester license and pay the habitat fee if normally required to have a license to hunt or trap.

108.7(2) Open area. River otters may be taken statewide. Bobcats may be taken in the following counties: Adair, Adams, Appanoose, Cass, Clarke, Davis, Decatur, Des Moines, Fremont, Guthrie, Harrison, Henry, Jefferson, Keokuk, Lee, Louisa, Lucas, Madison, Mahaska, Marion, Mills, Monona, Monroe, Montgomery, Page, Pottawattamie, Ringgold, Taylor, Union, Van Buren, Wapello, Warren, Washington, Wayne, and Woodbury.

108.7(3) Quotas and seasonal bag limit.

a. Seasonal bag limit. The seasonal bag limit is 3 river otters and 1 bobcat per person.

b. Quotas. The quota for the number of river otters that may be taken is 650 statewide. The quota for the number of bobcats that may be taken is 350 in the open area. The season shall end for river otters when the number of river otters trapped, as determined by the harvest reporting system, reaches the quota. The season shall end for bobcats when the number of bobcats taken, as determined by the harvest reporting system, reaches the quota. Trappers shall be allowed a grace period that ends on midnight of the day after the quota is reached to clear their traps of river otters or bobcats. River otters or bobcats found in traps during the grace period may be kept even though the quota is exceeded provided that the trapper has not reached the trapper's personal bag limit. River otters or bobcats trapped after the grace period or in excess of the seasonal bag limit must be turned over to the department; the trapper shall not be penalized.

108.7(4) Season dates. The season for taking river otters and bobcats opens on the first Saturday in November and closes when the quota has been reached, as explained in this rule, or on January 31 of the following year, whichever occurs first.

108.7(5) Reporting requirements.

a. Anyone, including a landowner or tenant not required to have a fur harvester license, who takes a river otter or bobcat must report the harvest to a DNR conservation officer or designated DNR employee within 24 hours. The fur harvester must arrange to receive a CITES tag from the officer or designated DNR employee within seven days of the time the harvest is reported. The river otter or bobcat shall be skinned and the carcass turned over to the DNR conservation officer or designated DNR employee at the time the CITES tag is issued. If the specimen is to be kept whole for taxidermy purposes, a cut shall be made by the trapper between the gum line and eye so the CITES tag can be attached to the skin. It shall be the responsibility of the taxidermist to have the carcass turned over to a DNR conservation officer or designated DNR employee once that animal has been skinned for taxidermy purposes.

b. Upon receiving a telephone report that a river otter or bobcat has been legally taken, the conservation officer or DNR employee will call the department's harvest reporting system. The number of river otters and bobcats taken will be updated daily, and a message will be recorded on the department's telephone system. The number taken will be available 24 hours a day. Fur harvesters may check the message daily to determine when the season closes and when the grace period begins and ends. The department will use all practical means to publicize these dates.

108.7(6) Tagging requirements. Every river otter or bobcat that may legally be kept must have a CITES tag attached. Tags will be supplied by the conservation officer or designated DNR employee. The tag must remain with the pelt until the pelt is sold or used for other purposes that render it no longer available for sale. Persons displaying river otters or bobcats as taxidermy mounts or as other decorative items must keep the tags in their possession as proof of legal harvest.